

'Iron Mountain' Peace Study A Hoax, Pentagon Declares

By Clark Mollenhoff
(Of The Register's Washington Bureau)

WASHINGTON, D.C. — The Defense Department declared Wednesday that an alleged secret government study published as "Report From Iron Mountain" is a hoax.

Richard Fryklund, deputy assistant secretary of defense, said, "We have examined this alleged report thoroughly and have made an investigation and have established conclusively that it is a hoax."

Excerpts in Magazine

The book is published by Dial Press, and 28,000 words from the book are being carried in the current Esquire magazine under a title: "On the Possibility and Desirability of Peace."

Leonard Lewin, a New York free-lance writer, wrote the foreword to "Report." In the foreword, he represents the book as a condensation of an authentic report by a high-level, 15-man study group that concluded that it would probably not be in the best interests of society to achieve peace.

Lewin claims the report was given to him by a Midwestern professor who was a member of the special study group. According to Lewin, the group concluded: "Lasting peace, while not theoretically impossible, is probably unattainable; even if it could be achieved it would almost certainly not be in the best interests of a stable society to achieve it."

According to Lewin, he wrote the foreword and arranged to have the report published by Dial Press because "in my opinion, the decision of the special study group to censor its own

findings was not merely timid but presumptuous.

"I should state, for the record, that I do not share the attitudes toward war and peace, life and death, and survival of the species manifested in the report," Lewin wrote in the foreword. "Few readers will, in human terms, it is an outrageous document. But it does represent a serious and challenging effort to define an enormous problem."

Saw It Was Hoax

Fryklund said Wednesday that "after reading no more than ten pages of the so-called report, I could tell it was a hoax."

But, after reading it, Fryklund said he had it researched to determine if there was any study group that had been established after 1963 that might have fit the description in "Report From Iron Mountain" or that might have written such a report.

"There was no such committee, and there was no such report," Fryklund said. "The evidence was conclusive."

Robert McCloskey, deputy assistant secretary of state, said that the Arms Control and Disarmament Agency had made a study and determined that the report was not authentic.

It was learned from publishing sources that the purported "Report" was written by Lewin, who then wrote a foreword and represented to Dial Press that it was an authentic report.

Review Scheduled

Byron Dobell, editor of Book World, published by the Washington Post and the Chicago Tribune, said Wednesday that he knew the so-called report "was a hoax from the first time

I read the galley proofs on it."

He said that a review of "Report From Iron Mountain," scheduled for publication this Sunday in Book Week, was written by John Kenneth Galbraith, a professor of economics at Harvard and former ambassador to India. Dobell said the review is a "tongue-in-cheek review."

Richard Baron, president of Dial Press, said he did not know the book was a hoax at the time he agreed to publish it, "and I don't know that it is a hoax now."

"I will concede that the Defense Department has better facilities for looking into this sort of thing to determine whether it is authentic," Baron said. "I also know that the Defense Department and the CIA made a lot of denials on matters a few months ago, and the officials found they had to reverse themselves."

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